

Marriage and Feelings

How do you feel today? Excited, happy, sparkling, animated, lonely, indifferent, sexy, mindless, disturbed, agitated, upset, sad, concerned, curious, nosy or intent? You know, we can go through each of the above feelings in one day!!!! That is a very scary thought, but it does happen each and every day - in our marriages, at work with our co-workers, and definitely – strong feelings arise when you're dealing with your children. We need to learn to cope with each other's feelings on a day-to-day basis and that is NOT an easy assignment. We create feelings in us as soon as we awake, especially if we are NOT a morning person, you might feel grumpy or quiet. Your spouse wakes up and he/she IS a morning person, joyous and cheery! What a combination -- joyous and grumpy. How do we cope with such feelings so early in the morning -- clash or accept?

Believe it or not, it is possible to live a harmonious life with all of these different feelings constantly surfacing. We call that acceptance of feelings. One very important key to remember is that feelings are neither right nor wrong, unless you act immorally (striking someone) and no one creates our feelings, we create our own feelings. So the next time you point your finger at your spouse and tell him/her "you made me feel this way," remember, you made yourself feel this way, period. Because you are a unique individual and that's how God created us, for the most part, we cannot feel the exact same way our spouse is feeling at that exact time. Our feelings differ drastically. My feeling of joy, is a smile, a carefree walk but Mar's feeling of joy is she is jumping out of her skin and she's ecstatic. Same feeling, but a completely different way to express it.

Often we get in trouble in our marriage because of the different levels of feelings and neither the husband or the wife takes the time to try and understand each other. Sweep it under the rug and it will go away. Wrong, it will not. When Mar is sad over something and I cannot reach her low point of sadness, she begins to get more upset with me because I just don't understand her feelings. But when I'm screaming because The Pittsburgh Steelers just scored a touchdown, she thinks I'm crazy for being so exuberant, she's happy too but nowhere near my ecstatic feelings. Those "high fives" just don't seem the same with her as they do with our sons.

Feelings need to be understood by each party and our feelings change from day to day, week-to-week, same feelings different intensities. Marriage is based on understanding each other's feelings, not ignoring them. That's when couples get into real trouble! There ARE times when we don't even understand our own feelings, but yet we still expect our spouse to understand them. A little absurd when you think of it that way.

The key to overcoming the trials and tribulations of feelings is to accept each other's feelings and make an effort to describe and understand what each of you are feeling. An example, Mar is feeling excited about something and I give her that odd look we men sometime give. At that time she will describe her feelings by color or something that happened to us in the past where I was feeling that same way. She described

When we received our first son from the adoption agency, the happiness and joy we both felt and I can think back to that exact day and truly understand what her excited feeling is!! That is a great way to communicate feelings and a great way to really understand each other in more depth.

Remember that feelings are morally neither right nor wrong unless acted upon. We cannot control our feelings, but we can control our actions surrounding the feelings. As we look at each other today and don't quite understand what he/she is feeling, take his/her hand, kiss and hold each other, your feelings will change and those loving feelings of romance and joy will be felt by both. Have a beautiful and precious day!!!

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